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A/AC.240/1995/WG/10
22 June 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE FIFTIETH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS
Drafting Group

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Draft declaration (rolling text 2) submitted by the Chairman

1. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we, the Heads of State, Heads of Government and heads of delegation, representing the peoples of the world:

- Express our gratitude to all men and women who have made the United Nations possible, done its work and served its ideals

- Solemnly reaffirm the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our commitments to them

- Are determined that the United Nations of the future will work with renewed vigour and effectiveness towards ensuring a better life for and understanding between the peoples of the world

2. It remains deeply relevant to recall that the Charter of the United Nations was written following the untold sufferings of the Second World War. Its commitment "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" is as vital today as it was 50 years ago. In this, as in other respects, the Charter gives expression to the common values and aspirations of humankind.

3. The United Nations has been constantly tested by conflict and turbulent change, yet it has survived and persevered to achieve much for people all over the world. Through the decolonization process and the elimination of apartheid it has ensured to hundreds of millions of human beings the fundamental right of self-determination. It has helped to shape the very structure of international relations in the modern age.

4. The speed and extent of change in today's world point to a future of great complexity and challenge. Our ability to shape that future creatively has been expanded by the end of the cold war, but the end of that confrontation has also increased sharply the level of expectations of the United Nations.

5. For these reasons, it is essential that the United Nations itself be reformed and modernized. The authority of the universal organ of the United Nations, the General Assembly, must be fully respected and utilized; the role of the Economic and Social Council must be strengthened; and the Security Council must be expanded to reflect contemporary realities and its working efficiency improved. These and other essential changes within the United Nations system must be made without delay if we are to ensure that the United Nations serves well the peoples in whose name it was established.

6. To meet these challenges, and on the basis of our common recognition that action to secure global peace, security and stability will be futile unless the economic and social needs of people, as well as of States, are addressed, we will:

- Fully utilize the facilities of the United Nations in the field of pacific settlement of disputes and enhance its capabilities in conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy

- Enhance the capability of the United Nations to carry out peace-keeping operations and in peace-building

- Strongly support United Nations, national and regional actions on all forms of arms control and disarmament and on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, in pursuit of our common commitment to a world free of such weapons

- Act together to defeat the threats to States and peoples posed by terrorism, internationally organized crime and the narcotics and illicit arms trades

- Strengthen consultation and cooperation between regional arrangements or agencies and the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security

7. A dynamic, vigorous and fair international economic environment is essential to the well-being of humankind and to international peace, security and stability. This need must be addressed, in greater measure, by the United Nations.

8. The United Nations has played an important role in the promotion of economic and social development and has, over the years, provided life-saving assistance to women, children and men around the world. But the pledge recorded in the Charter that all members of the United Nations shall take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development, has not been adequately implemented.

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9. Today, one fifth of the world's 5.7 billion people live in abject poverty. Extraordinary measures are needed to address this and related problems of disease, the situation of women and children, migrant workers, social exclusion narcotics and environmental degradation.

10. To this end, the United Nations has convened a number of specifically focused global conferences in the last five years. As a result, a vital consensus has emerged on concepts of sustainable economic growth and sustainabl development, at the core of which is recognition that people must be at the centre of our actions towards such development.

11. In this context, we are convinced that democracy and the promotion and protection of all human rights, particularly the right to development, are essential foundations of development.

12. Accordingly, in response to the right to development, we are resolved to:

- Promote an open framework for trade, investment and transfers of technology and knowledge, as well as enhanced cooperation in the area: of debt and finance for development, as critical conditions for sustained economic growth. Particular attention should be given to national and international action to enhance the benefits of the process of globalization for all countries and to avoid the marginalization from the world economy of the least developed countries and countries in Africa

- Reinvigorate the dialogue between the developed and developing countries on all development issues based on the imperatives of mutual benefit and interest, genuine interdependence and shared but differentiated responsibility

- Enhance efforts to develop an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system in order to promote growth and development and the free movement of all factors of production

- Promote social development through decisive national and international action aimed at the eradication of poverty as an imperative of humankind and the promotion of full employment and social integration

- Recognize that the full participation of women is central to all efforts to achieve development

- Promote actions to reduce and eliminate unsustainable patters of production and consumption as well as policies designed to meet the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, recognizing that environmental sustainability constitutes an integral part of the development process

- Improve the effectiveness of the United Nations system for development, especially at the field level, and strengthen the role of

the United Nations system in all relevant fields of international economic cooperation

- Intensify cooperation in natural disaster reduction, combating desertification, disaster relief, post-disaster rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance, in order to enhance the capabilities of countries, particularly developing countries, to cope with such situations

13. We support deeply the Charter's affirmation of the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small and the principle that all human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

14. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of all States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. We will therefore:

- Promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are inherent to all human beings

- Strengthen policies and programmes that ensure the full participation of women in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life as equal partners, and the full realization of their rights with respect to education and access to work on fair terms

- Protect the rights of the child, of youth and of the disabled

- Recognize and support indigenous people in their pursuit of economic and social development with full respect for their identity, traditions, forms of social organization and cultural values

15. The Charter of the United Nations has provided a framework for the promotion of international law enabling the United Nations to play a crucial role in the development of international law and the building of a structure of modern international relations. The continued promotion of international law must be pursued with renewed determination, with a view to ensuring that relations between nations are based on the principles of justice and universally accepted principles of international law. Such action is particularly required given developments under way in technology, transport, information and resource related fields and international financial markets, as well as the growing complexity of the work of the United Nations in the humanitarian and refugee assistance fields.

16. We are determined to:

- Promote acceptance of and respect for the principles of international law

- Encourage universal ratification of multilateral treaties and compliance with the obligations arising from them

- Promote respect for and implementation of instruments of international humanitarian law

- Promote the further codification and progressive development of international law, aimed in particular at pursuing economic and social progress and "better standards of life in larger freedom" and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms

- Promote the building and maintenance of fair and just societies, in which all people are able to participate

- Encourage resort to means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States

- Build and maintain justice between nations in full compliance with the principle of the sovereign equality of States enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations

17. We recognize that our common work, if it is to be successful, requires that participation in it be open to all actors, governmental, non-governmental and the private sector. We will facilitate such participation.

18. Equally, a healthy United Nations needs adequate resources. We reaffirm the obligation of Member States to meet in full and on time their financial obligations to the United Nations system and to provide that system with appropriate budgets.

19. The secretariats of the United Nations system must improve significantly their efficiency and effectiveness. To this end, Member States must pursue and take responsibility for restructuring the system.

20. Our resolve on this historic occasion is clear. The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations must be seized as an opportunity to redirect it to greater service to humankind, especially to those who are suffering and are deeply deprived. This is the practical and moral challenge of our time. Our obligation to this end is found in the Charter. The need for it is manifest in the condition of humankind. We will give to the twenty-first century a United Nations equipped and structured to serve effectively the causes of peace, development, equality and justice.